2003-2004 No Child Left Behind—Blue Ribbon Schools Program Cover Sheet

Name of Principal : Mrs. Pamela Sawyer Bone (Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it	should appear in the	official records)
Official School Name Gatesville Elementary (As it should appear in the official in	records)	
School Mailing Address 2537 E. Main Street (If address is P.O. Box, also include	e street address)	
Gatesville	Texas	76528-2627
City	State	Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)
Tel. (254) 865-7262	Fax <u>(254)</u>	248-0077
Website/URL http://gatesvilleisd.esc12.net	_ E-mail <u>pbo</u>	ne@gatesvilleisd.org
I have reviewed the information in this application, include certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is		ility requirements on page 2, and
	Date	
(Principal's Signature)		
Name of Superintendent Mr. James M. Baize (Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr.,	, Other)	
District Name Gatesville Independent School District (25-	4) 865-72:	<u>51</u>
I have reviewed the information in this application, included certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.	ding the eligib	ility requirements on page 2, and
	Date	
(Superintendent's Signature)		
Name of School Board Dr. Bob Bates President/Chairperson		
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr.	, Other)	
I have reviewed the information in this package, includic certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.	ng the eligibil	ity requirements on page 2, and
	Date	
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)		

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

[Include this page in the school's application as page 2.]

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

- 1. The school has some configuration that includes grades K-12. (Schools with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
- 2. The school has not been in school improvement status or been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's adequate yearly progress requirement in the 2003-2004 school year.
- 3. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, it has foreign language as a part of its core curriculum.
- 4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 1998.
- 5. The nominated school or district is not refusing the OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
- 6. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if the OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
- 7. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school, or the school district as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
- 8. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT (Questions 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1.	Numbe	r of schools in the district:	1 1 1 1 1	Elementary schools Middle schools Junior high schools High schools Other Primary School Grades PPCD, Pre-K, K, 1 TOTAL
2.	District	Per Pupil Expenditure:	<u>\$4962</u>	
	Average	e State Per Pupil Expenditure:	<u>\$5030</u>	
SCI	HOOL (To be completed by all schools))	
3.	Categor	ry that best describes the area w	here the	school is located:
		Urban or large central city	riation try	nical of an urban area
	[]	Suburban school with characte Suburban	ristics ty	picai of an urban area
	[X] []	Small city or town in a rural ar Rural	rea	
4.	7	_ Number of years the principal	has beer	n in her/his position at this school.
		_ If fewer than three years, how	long wa	s the previous principal at this school?

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
K				7			
1				8			
2	91	89	180	9			
3	94	77	171	10			
4				11			
5				12			
6				Other			
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL \rightarrow						351	

5. Number of students enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

6.		s in the school: 04° 00° 00° 01°	 White Black or African Hispanic or Lati Asian/Pacific Is American Indian Total 	no lander
7.	Student tur	nover, or mobility rate, during	g the past year:	17.37
	October 1 a			erred to or from different schools between all number of students in the school as of
	(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	28	
	(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	33	
	(3)	Subtotal of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	61	
	(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	351	
	(5)	Subtotal in row (3) divided by total in row (4)	.1737	
	(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	17.37	
8.	Proficient Number of	Iglish Proficient students in the languages represented: 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2	7	_% _ Total Number Limited English
9.	Students el	igible for free/reduced-priced		
	low-incom	e families or the school does	nably accurate estiment participate in the	I Number Students Who Qualify nate of the percentage of students from ne federally-supported lunch program, it, and explain how it arrived at this

estimate.

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10.	Students receiving special education service	es:	
			52 Total Number of Students Served
	Indicate below the number of students with Individuals with Disabilities Education Act		pilities according to conditions designated in the
	_1Autism	0	Orthopedic Impairment
	0 Deafness	6	Other Health Impaired
	0 Deaf-Blindness	26	Specific Learning Disability
	0 Hearing Impairment	34	Speech or Language Impairment
	3 Mental Retardation	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
	0 Multiple Disabilities	0	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
11.	Indicate number of full-time and part-time s	staff 1	members in each of the categories below:

Number of Staff

	Full-time	Part-Time
Administrator(s) Classroom teachers	1 18	
Special resource teachers/specialists	10	3
Paraprofessionals Support staff	<u>8</u> <u>10</u>	
Total number	47	

- 12. Average school student-"classroom teacher" ratio: 20:1
- 13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. The student dropout rate is defined by the state. The student drop-off rate is the difference between the number of entering students and the number of exiting students from the same cohort. (From the same cohort, subtract the number of exiting students from the number of entering students; divide that number by the number of entering students; multiply by 100 to get the percentage drop-off rate.) Briefly explain in 100 words or fewer any major discrepancy between the dropout rate and the drop-off rate. (Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates and only high schools need to supply drop-off rates.)

	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000	1998-1999
Daily student attendance	95.7	96	96.1	96.	96.2
Daily teacher attendance	95	93.7	95.3	94.4	95
Teacher turnover rate	8.3	5.4	2.7	12.5	14
Student dropout rate	N/A	<u>N/A</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>N/A</u>
Student drop-off rate	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

PART III - SUMMARY

The continued improvement of student performance at Gatesville Elementary can be attributed to a shared vision throughout the school district and the rural Central Texas community of 11,000. Our belief is that students deserve high standards and quality instruction, and that combination will allow all students to succeed. Reaching beyond minimal expectations is expected of each campus, with our superintendent setting the standard of, "Acceptable is unacceptable." In order to carryout that shared vision, effective change has taken place in curriculum, instruction, and student expectations.

Gatesville Elementary serves second and third grade students attending Gatesville Independent School District in Gatesville, Texas. The mission at Gatesville Elementary is to educate each student to function successfully in a democratic society. Preparation for successful participation in a democratic society shall include the development of competence in communication and mathematical skills augmented by a sense of responsibility in civic, health, and economic affairs, and interpersonal relationships. At Gatesville Elementary, we believe that children come first, and every child should have a quality education. A positive school environment and healthy self-esteem are both necessary for success. Our school must have an inviting atmosphere for students, parents, and the community, and promote a strong cooperative effort between school and community, making our school accountable to our community. Quality educators must be hired and retained in order to promote high standards while allowing for diversity in our community.

The two grade levels at Gatesville Elementary are organized into eighteen self-contained classrooms with nine at the third grade level and nine at the second grade level. Support staff serves in accelerated and enrichment programs that include reading and math instruction, physical education, media-library skills, technology instruction, fine arts, gifted-talented differentiation, special education, and ESL instruction. The shared vision of student success has enabled the entire staff at Gatesville Elementary to work together as a cohesive group to embrace change. Through self-evaluation, collaborative planning and curriculum development, classrooms have moved from being teacher directed and textbook driven to experiential and collaborative environments that promote authentic learning for all students.

Gatesville Elementary became a two grade level campus in 1996 with the construction of Gatesville Intermediate where grades 4 through 6 were combined. The rationale in the reorganization of the campuses was to lower student populations per campus, especially K through 3, so that principals and staff were better able to closely monitor instruction and performance. Not only were the campuses being reorganized, but major changes were also in order for the classrooms on each campus. Campus principals were expected to have a "hands on" approach to facilitating instruction, monitoring progress, and above all, serving as the instructional leader of the campus. In order for the reorganization to be successful, communication between campuses was emphasized and planning opportunities across grade levels and campuses were developed. Planning across grade levels and campuses has proven to be such a critical element in the improvement of student performance, planning opportunities have been expanded with each year.

The true measure of the success of Gatesville Elementary goes beyond test scores. Our students are better prepared in seeking answers, developing conceptual understanding, and producing original works. Teachers have become learning facilitators to students who play a much more active role in their own learning. Students move within the classrooms taking an active role in their learning with strategies and learning opportunities that meet the needs of all learning styles and developmental levels. The students and teachers, through commitment to a shared vision of excellence, have met the challenge of "Acceptable is unacceptable."

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. The state of Texas has an established history of criterion referenced tests with entry level testing beginning at third grade. The previous Texas tests, TABS and then TEAMS, both indicated student mastery of basic skills. It was not until the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills of the early nineties, or TAAS, that the disaggregation of information from the tests became an important tool in promoting student success and evaluating instructional programs. Beginning in 1994, district performance has been reported by the Academic Excellence Indicator System or AEIS report. In 2003, TAAS evolved into Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, TAKS, which aligned with the state curriculum known as TEKS, or Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills.

Beginning with the kindergarten class of 1999-2000, implementation of the School Success Initiative put into place the learning standards that class would have to achieve as third graders. The new standards, known as Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), were put into place for the new test, Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills. Any child not passing the reading portion of the TAKS test would not be promoted to the fourth grade. Three administrations of the test would be given and accelerated instruction would be provided, but passing to the next grade was contingent upon passing the reading portion of the test. Reading academies were offered to kindergarten, first, second, and third grade teachers to for training to facilitate reading mastery.

The first administration of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, the state criterion-referenced test, is given to all Texas third graders during the spring semester. At Gatesville Elementary, the results of that testing are used to evaluate if the needs of our learners are being met. Scores have been made available since 1994 and each year's performance had shown a slight improvement, especially in reading. In 1998, the scores on the state criterion- referenced test, then known as TAAS, indicated that we still were not meeting the needs of our students, particularly our economically disadvantaged students. Scores for 1998 were 85.3% passing in reading and 80.8% passing in math and economically disadvantaged students scoring a dismal 58.6% in reading and 75.9% in math. The following year in 1999, the scores were 94.9% in reading and 90.8% in math. Scores for 2000 showed a passing rate of 95.9% in reading and 91.4% passing rate in math. Economically disadvantaged students did not perform well on the same test with a 79% passing rate in math, but did show improvement in reading with 92.3% passing.

Our entire staff was committed to the vision of improved student performance. Collaborating together, the staff addressed the loud wake up call that our instruction was not meeting the needs of all of our students, particularly students from economically disadvantaged households. Working as a staff, instruction and curriculum were evaluated and re-aligned. The experiential practices that had been implemented in reading instruction were also included in math instruction. Real world math opportunities in measurement, money, and time were included in daily instruction. Additional training was sought that specifically addressed children of poverty and meeting their needs. This training proved to be helpful in enlightening teachers about the expectations they had of children not only in the classroom, but also at home. High expectations were achievable and remained in place, but we had to offer more experiences to our students and more learning opportunities to our students during the course of the school day.

In the spring of 2001, students scored 96.2% in reading and 97% in math, with socio-economically disadvantaged students scoring 92.2% in reading and 92.6% in math. In 2002, 97.1% of students passed reading and 98.5% passed the math. Socio-economically disadvantaged students scored 95.7% on reading and 95.7% on math. Scores in 2003 indicated the same improvement with 98.5% students passing reading and 99.2% passing math. Socio-economically disadvantaged students continued to improve with a reading passing rate of 96.5% and a passing rate in math of 100%.

2. Two types of assessment data are used to evaluate and improve student performance. As described earlier, data collected from the TAKS test provides a view of the effectiveness of instruction and curriculum for third grade students and if that instruction is properly aligned in second grade, as well. To gain information previous to the TAKS test, students are evaluated in reading by using the state developed Texas Primary Reading Inventory. This inventory is administered to students K through grade 2, three times a year. It allows teachers and parents to follow reading progress in graphophonemic skills, comprehension, and fluency. K through 2 teachers have also developed an assessment in math and reading, formatted like the state developed TAKS test, but written and administered to assess K, 1, and 2 TEKS.

Another type of data used to evaluate ongoing student performance is the collection of authentic data using a variety of assessment approaches. Formative evaluations such as antecdotal record keeping, teacher-student conferences, student self-evaluation or record keeping, and teacher observation are effective tools in ongoing assessment of student progress. The use of these evaluations allows the teacher to know each student as a learner on a day- to-day basis and offer instruction and learning strategies needed for student success.

- 3. Student progress is reported to parents on a daily basis. Each child is provided with a daily learning log that serves as a communication tool between home and school. Parents are asked to review and sign each evening and about 90 percent of parents consistently review the learning logs each day. A listing of the learning of the day, homework assignments, grades, observations, concerns, and compliments are issued to parents on a daily basis, and parents, in turn, are given easy access to their child's teacher. Reading reports listing books read during the week are sent to parents every Friday. Progress reports are issued every three weeks, and report cards are issued every six weeks. With each administration of the TPRI to second graders, reports go home to parents indicating student progress. Parents of second and third graders are informed of testing standards at the beginning of the school, mid-year, and before the March administration of the TAKS reading test. Practice assessments for third graders using released versions of the TAKS test are sent home for parent review and signature after each of the four administrations during the school year. Annually, assessment results are reviewed at a monthly school board meeting that is advertised to our community. Testing results are published in the school paper, and the local newspaper, the *Gatesville Messenger*.
- 4. Gatesville Elementary was recently honored to participate in a panel discussion at the Region 12 Service Center that allowed schools demonstrating improvement to share their success stories. It was an enlightening experience for the participants from Gatesville Elementary as they learned, much to their surprise, that not every school has put into place the instructional practices and high expectations found at this campus. Gatesville Elementary teachers have proven to be excellent trainers for campus and cross campus training. Their training opportunities could be expanded to other districts. Sharing successes is one of the best components of school improvement and the lessons learned go both ways. Our staff would benefit from on-site visits from other schools or meetings with instructional teams from other schools to discuss effective change and the improvement of student performance. Going beyond the campus level study group and teaming with another elementary school in a book study program is another option teachers would like to consider. Teachers have been asked to reflect on one of their most positive classroom changes or experiences in hopes of publishing some of the best teaching practices at our school.

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PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

- 1. The learning standards set for each grade within the state developed Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) serve as the foundation for our curriculum. With the learning standards in place, the focus has shifted from what is going to be taught to how the learning will most effectively take place. The staff at Gatesville Elementary has been involved in the development and evaluation of the four core areas of curriculum, reading, math, social studies, and science. The reading curriculum includes the strands of listening/speaking, reading and writing. The curriculum has been re-aligned to include the use of authentic literature as the foundation of reading opportunities for students and connecting reading, writing, listening and speaking opportunities to those reading experiences. Operations, quantitative reasoning, patterns-relationships, algebraic reasoning, measurement, probability, statistics, and problem solving are included in the math curriculum. To better prepare students in math concepts, classrooms have become the center of real world math experiences. Manipulatives and tools of measurement are used daily to provide students with learning experiences that go beyond worksheets. The social studies curriculum strands are history, geography, economics, government, and citizenship, and the science curriculum is made of the strands of investigation, inquiry-critical thinking, tools, systems, change, living organisms, and processes of natural resources. At the third grade, the strand of adaptations and inherited traits is included in the science curriculum. Both grade levels have collaborated to integrate science and social studies learning standards by using a universal theme. The third grade has used the theme of community to integrate its curriculum and instruction of science and social studies. The theme of community has also been integrated in reading and writing opportunities. As a culminating activity, the third grade tours our own community visiting historical sights, governmental agencies, and local points of interest. Students meet city and county officials and learn of their roles in our community. Second grade has integrated the four core areas of instruction and tied them to the study of each continent. The integrated curriculum guides students as they travel from continent to continent learning of cultures, habitats, and political issues through varied experiences.
- The learning standards for reading established in the TEKS serve as the foundation of the reading curriculum. Staff members grades K through 6 collaborated on the development of a calendar that sequenced reading and writing targets in an effective approach. With the "what" to teach and the "when" to teach in place, the most important aspect of the reading curriculum was how to implement those learning standards in the classroom. Working as an entire staff, the reading curriculum was realigned using the most effective practices in the teacher of reading and writing. The teachers wanted to empower students to grow as readers. In order to that, the curriculum was designed to offer more opportunities for students reading complete selections of their choice. The reading curriculum has moved from textbook driven drills and skills worksheets to print rich environments that provide reading choices and opportunities for students. Extensive classroom libraries of leveled titles provide students with opportunities to select and read original and complete books based upon their interests and needs. Students are provided with a forty-five minute reading block of time set aside for selecting materials and reading in the classroom. Teachers and students conference about selections allowing teachers to monitor progress and offer support. Different types of genre are introduced and studied with the classroom teacher serving as reading role model and reading aloud to the students. The school library also plays an important role in the reading process with circulation doubling since 1996. The library is open to students from 7:50 am until 9:50 each day. Students are also scheduled for a forty-five minute library rotation every fourth day. At that time, the librarian instructs students on media, research, and circulation skills and introduces new titles found in the library. While the state adopted basal series of McGraw-Hill is still a part of overall instruction, it is only one component of the reading curriculum.

- 3. As with the reading curriculum, the math curriculum in place at Gatesville Elementary follows a K-6 calendar that was established to follow an appropriate pace and sequence for math. Developed by staff and implemented grades K-6, the TEKS and TAKS are organized in the calendar. The math curriculum has also undergone changes as to how math concepts are experienced in the classroom. The state adopted series of Scott Foresman Addison Wesley serves as one resource of the math curriculum. The math curriculum has moved from being generated by the text to being experienced by the students. Teachers wanted to create a learning environment that allowed students to connect math not only to their other studies, but also to recognize math in the real world. The use of manipulatives and problem solving strategies were incorporated into daily instruction. In assessing the student performance in math, the curriculum was adjusted to include math strands that required daily reinforcement. Measurement, geometry, problem solving, and probability are skills that have been spiraled throughout the curriculum, as they have been included in daily instruction and assessment. Teachers collaborated to plan and produce daily math practices that are used each day.
- 4. The instructional staff at Gatesville Elementary has been committed to seeking and implementing instructional practices that meet the needs of all students. As described earlier, the improvement of student learning is closely tied to the use of multiple methods of instruction to teach the same concepts. Instructional methods have become much more real world experiences, with students taking an active role in their learning. Students are actively experiencing their own learning, not just experiencing their teachers. Students have been included more in the production and participation of their learning materials, such as producing their own color coded study guide rather than being handed a sheet of multiplication tables or vocabulary terms to memorize.

The attitude of our campus is that each moment of the school day is critical to the growth of students as learners. Class time is used effectively and efficiently in the best interest of our students. With extensive bus routes that cover over 2,000 per day, along with fifty percent of our student population traveling to and from school by bus, offering tutorials to students in math and reading became a challenge. Before and after school tutorial sessions were missing too many students who were not able to attend due to transportation. The staff developed a tutorial program that would serve all students and take place during the course of the day. Twice a week, the last forty-five minutes of the day is set aside for math and reading tutorials. The classroom teachers take the smallest groups, which are fluid from day to day, and the principal takes the largest group. Objectives are addressed according to student need and the learning takes place as a collaborative effort.

5. Staff development has played a key role in the improvement of student performance by using two approaches. Different information and instructional approaches are brought into our campus by providing staff opportunities for training outside of the district and then returning as a trainer at the campus level. Our staff collaborates in implementing new methods and materials into the established curriculum. Also proving to be most effective is the use of multi-campus staff development that has taken place each summer. During staff development in June, teachers meet to evaluate the prior year and share information across grade levels. They also work together in the preparation of materials for the upcoming year. Critical planning then takes place for the upcoming school year. Removed from the hectic pace of the instructional year, teachers look forward to this time to share student data, instructional methods, and address curriculum concerns.

PART VII – ASSESSMENT RESULTS

GATESVILLE ELEMENTARY	TAKS1	TAAS	TAAS	TAAS2
3 RD GRADE READING	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
TESTING MONTH	Mar-Apr	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES:				
% Met Minimum Standard		97.1	96.2	95.9
% Met Standards	98.5			
% Commended Performance	28.4			
Number of Students Tested	165	174	209	201
% of Total Tested	97.6	98.9	98.6	98.9
Special Education Students Tested	37	38	45	13
SUB-GROUP SCORES:				
Economically Disadvantaged				
% Met Minimum Standard		95.7	92.2	92.3
% Met Standards	96.5			
% Commended Performance	21.1			
Number of Students Tested	78	70	82	84
2. White Students				
% Met Minimum Standard		99.1	98.5	96
% Met Standards	99.1			
% Commended Performance	30.1			
Number of Students Tested	135	141	171	166
3. Hispanic Students				
% Met Minimum Standard		92.3	95.2	95.7
% Met Standards	100			
% Commended Performance	15.45			
Number of Students Tested	18	20	27	26
4. African-American Students				
% Met Minimum Standard		91.7	100	100
% Met Standards	85.7			
% Commended Performance	28.6			
Number of Students Tested	8	13	8	6
STATE SCORES:				
% Met Minimum Standard		88	86.8	87.9
% Received Academic Recognition		N/A	N/A	N/A
% Met Standards	89.6			
% Commended Performance	18.5			
1First administration of TAKS				
2No SDAA exams were given this year				

GATESVILLE ELEMENTARY	TAKS 1	TAAS	TAAS	TAAS 2
3RD GRADE MATH	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
TESTING MONTH	Mar-Apr	April	April	April

SCHOOL SCORES:				
% Met Minimum Standard		98.5	97	91.4
% Met Standards	99.2			
% Commended Performance	23.3			
Number of Students Tested	165	174	209	201
% of Total Tested	97.6	98.9	98.6	92.5
Special Education Students Tested	37	38	45	13
SUB-GROUP SCORES:				
1. Economically Disadvantaged				
% Met Minimum Standard		95.7	92	79.4
% Met Standards	100			
% Commended Performance	14.5			
Number of Students Tested	78	70	82	79
2. White Students				
% Met Minimum Standard		99.1	98.5	95
% Met Standards	99.1			
% Commended Performance	23.4			
Number of Students Tested	135	141	171	166
3. Hispanic Students				
% Met Minimum Standard		100	90.9	73.9
% Met Standards	100			
% Commended Performance	23.1			
Number of Students Tested	18	20	27	26
4. African-American Students				
% Met Minimum Standard		90.9	100	80
% Met Standards	100			
% Commended Performance	28.6			
Number of Students Tested	8	13	8	6
STATE SCORES:				
% Met Minimum Standard		87.4	83.1	80.6
% Received Academic Recognition		N/A	N/A	N/A
% Met Standards	90.8			
% Commended Performance	12			
1First administration of TAKS				
2No SDAA exams were given this year				